LAUNCH OF THE KENYA NA CONGO SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

- TABLE OF CONTENTS:

  1. INTRODUCTION.
  2. PURPOSE AND AIM OF THE CONVENING.
  3. METHODOLOGY.
  4. FINDINGS AND WAY FORWARD.

---

1. “I wish to make it clear again that we are anti-nobody. We are pro-Africa. We breathe, we dream, we live Africa because Africa and humanity are inseparable.”
II. Without organization, ideas, after some initial momentum, start losing their effect. They become routine, degenerate into conformity, and end up simply a memory. I raise this warning because too often, in this short but rich period of our revolution, many great initiatives have failed. They have been forgotten because of the lack of an organiza-tional apparatus needed to keep them going and bring them to fruition. Che Guevara.

III. “Africa needs back its economy, its politics, its culture, its languages and all its patriotic writers”. Ngugi wa Thiong’o

IV. “And just as, in the First Scramble for Africa, one tribe was divided against another tribe to make the division of Africa easier, in the Second Scramble for Africa one nation is going to be divided against another nation to make it easier to control Africa by making her weak and divided against herself”
— Julius Nyerere

V. “Africa has her mysteries, and even a wise man cannot understand them. But a wise man respects them.” Miriam Makeba.

INTRODUCTION.

The Social Movements convening in Kenya was majorly inspired by the precarious conditions that glares harshly upon the struggling masses of the African people. A large mass of the population has constantly battled against domination, injustices and the wounds from the unresolved historical injustices. This condition thus, leaves the masses of our people confronting various social, political and economic conditions. The continent currently stands at a crossroads in achieving basic standard necessities as the world grapples with harsh geo-political conditions, economic turmoil and social injustices.

The convening of the African Movements involved member organizations of the Affriki network from the 5th to the 27th of February 2024. A collective of social movements within Africa and the diaspora. The collective offers a platform for grassroots people organizations
to interact and forge people inspired approaches in tackling local and continental social justice issues, present to our realities in building Pan-Africanism of a new kind, bridge ties through international solidarity and promote popular democracy. The collective comprises of various member organizations who actively participated in the assembling, including:

1. Y’en A Marre of Senegal.
2. Filimbi and LUCHA of DRC.
5. The Tanzania Socialist Forum in Tanzania.
6. Team Gom Sa Bopa in the Gambia.
7. Project South.

Some of the shared values and key objectives that the collective aimed to promote include:

1. Promoting movement exchange, shared objectives & planned outcomes campaigns.
2. Share experiences of approaches and best practices of African people’s struggle between Grassroots community organizations, social movements in Africa and the United States, simultaneously creating a new spirit of Pan Africanism rooted in our history.
3. Develop collaborative strategies with Project South and design a strategic plan for a political training program for activists engaged in social movement on the continent and in the United States;
4. Create an ideological program around the common struggles encountered by African activists aimed at building a common path towards the realization of the African dream: Summer School and fellowship programs.

   I. Design a collective curriculum and program for the existing Afrikki fellowship exchange.
   II. Design a harmonized approach towards a long term strategy to avoid scattered and isolated political actions.

**Participant’s Member Organizational profiles.**

1. **Team Gom Sa Bopa.**

   Gom Sa Bopa means “believe in yourself” in the local Wolof language. Team Gom Sa Bopa (TGSB) is a youth led movement dedicated to raising awareness among young people through arts and entertainment and providing an opportunity for citizens to participate towards National Development. Gom Sa Bopa regularly engages artists and activists to play an active role in the socio-economic development of their communities and serve as watchdogs holding leaders entrusted with the development of our country to account. The
movement has played a major role in transforming the society through promoting conscious music and art. The have engaged in various social justice projects, advocacy for the new constitution and changing civilian security relationship. Most of these can be found on their website and social media handles below:

Follow us on social media: Facebook https://www.facebook.com/teamgomsabopa

2. Lucha in the DRC.

As Congo experiences a tumultuous political situation, Lucha has been on the forefront to transform the so LUCHA is a non-violent and non-partisan social movement that fights for the change of the various evils and values plaguing our Congolese state but also for the change of the system. The lucha's mission is to raise awareness of the population by making it demanding but also to make the authorities (rulers) accountable to the governed.

She has as her vision, to transform and construct a Congo of a new form. A Congo where peace and distributive justice reign. Internally we are organized in sections of which today we can count 64 sections and in cells namely the cell of education, operation and action, communication, solidarity and documentation. Each of these respective cells has a well-defined and precise role. The Lucha began in 2012 by raising students who were already fed up with things like the lack of drinking water in the city of Goma. Lucha pursues 3 constructions, that of a collective consciousness, that of power and that of a citizen alternative. Since their existence, Lucha has lost 4 of its activists. The battles already won include: Bye Bye KABILA, solidarity for Beni; Goma wants water, supports the FARDC, Rwanda is killing in DRC among other successful interventions.

Today one of its activists is imprisoned for criticizing the failure of the State of Siege and reminding the police of his work city and fight for freedom and social justice for the people in the DRC.

Mathare Social Justice Centre (MSJC) is a grassroots community-based organization that advocate against structural violence meted out against the Mathare community, one of the informal settlements in Nairobi. MSJC has the mission to promote social justice through engaged community and social movement platforms. Over the 10 years of its existence, MSJC has sparks into an open space for social movement building and community organizing, advancing the struggle for a democratic state founded on a culture of social justice and human rights for all, Protecting the constitutional gains and implementation of the Constitution.


The Social Justice Centre working group is a collective leadership of registered community-based organizations established as Social justice centres based within Nairobi’s informal settlements. The movement has come from a history of community dialogue and debates initially organized by BUNGE La Mwananchi and, campaigns at Mathare Social Justice Centre. The various incidents pertained to issues of rampant human rights violations and social injustices like abject poverty and increased police brutality. The campaigns in turn convened social justice activists from diverse communities, creating a collective voice for grassroots movements.

4. TASOFO- TANZANIA SOCIALIST FORUM. (JUKWAA LA WASOSHIALISTI TANZANIA)

JULAWATA is a young forum, established in late 2015 in order to bring together grassroots movements and progressive organizations so as to unite their ‘fronts’ in one struggle.

Some of the founding members had previously been active in radical student organizations at higher learning institutions (eg: the Tanzania Youth Voice [Sauti ya Vijana Tanzania – SAVITA], TSNP, DARUSO) and had tried to create links with grassroots organizations.

Post-2008 era in Tanzania marked the end of neoliberal honeymoon in Tanzania. Virtually all sectors of the working people (wavuja-jasho) were protesting neoliberal policies. Students vs. fees; peasants vs. land dispossession & falling prices; small scale miner’s vs large-scale miners dispossession; workers vs harsh conditions & poor wages; bus/truck vs precarious labor; petty traders & slum dwellers vs evictions from the city. The struggles against neoliberal capitalism were disjointed, localized, and issue-based. Successful attempts by the ruling class to hijack, divide and depoliticize the working people to prevent united working class action against neoliberal capitalism. E.g.: (i) fueling violence between peasants against pastoralists over land. (ii) The rise of populism and parochial ideologies (tribalism, parochial nationalism, religious chauvinism, etc.)
• **FIELD MARSHALLS BAND.**

• **Le Balai Citoyen, (citizen broom)**

Initially was a protest movement from Burkina Faso which emerged to protect the constitution and promote democratic change. Balai Citoyen played a key role in the October 2014 popular uprising that ended the 27-year reign of Blaise Compaore. After the November 2015 elections, the movement transformed to a permanent citizen monitoring force ensuring respect for democratic principles. However, in a context marked by political instability, the ongoing transition, insecurity and the decline of civic space, the movement ought to overcome various foreseeable challenges.

• **Y’EN A MARRE (Fed up)**

A social movement from Senegal that campaigns for social justice, freedom, democracy and the rule of law. It is a popular Senegalese citizen movement created by a collective made up of rappers, journalists, students, teachers, workers. It is a political movement that offers a platform for citizen to express their issues, regarding social and political injustices. It is passionately committed to raising the consciousness of the Senegalese youth in the path to building a better society.

**AFRIKKI EXCHANGE METHODOLOGY.**

The three week interaction involved participants from Senegal, Gambia, Kenya, Tanzania and Burkina Faso.
The political program involved engagements in deliberations, analysis and a pedagogical learning process designed to highlight challenges, identify common goals and generate an actionable program to solve the challenges collectively. The discussions were aimed at bridging harmony, solidarity and unity among the participating organizations and countries within the continent. It involved a creative approach in conversations pertaining to self-reliance, analysis of the contemporary political conditions and a renaissance of the People Centred Pan Africanism.

The program went further to explore field activities and visits to historical sites. The participants, in their formal and informal interactions participated in conversations among the participants, various social movements, and experiences with veteran activists, authors, former political activists, political and ecological learning trips, exchanges with both rural and urban organizing. The field visits involved visits to the Mathare, Githurai, Uwama, and the Kisumu Peace and Social Justice and organs like the Social Justice travelling theatre. There were also talks with Prof Carol Davis Boyce, Abdillatif Abdalla, A kenyan renowned poet, Wahu Kaara, Timothy Njoya, and Njeri Kabeberi who have all participated in different phases of the Kenyan liberation struggle. The experiences were aimed at offering an all-round, holistic understanding among the participants on the similarities and the differences within our struggles.

The program also incorporated cultural factors by promoting the role of progressive and revolutionary art and music within the program. Furthermore, it explored seminars on Pan-Africanism, solidarity statements and activities with the struggling people of the world including the Palestine, Congo and Sudan.

The participants logistical and experiential planning was designed and agreed by the base groups established by the participants. The base groups took charge of the conversations, active involvement and execution of the program and activities. The two base-groups were Mau Mau and Wangari Maathai. This allowed the participants to interact constructively and promote peer learning within the pedagogical framework, which seemed effective in daily running of the program.
• **The learning-exchange approach, design and outlook.**

Conversations revolved around various societal issues experienced by the various societies and communities. To achieve a comprehensive experience, the participants went through various topics including:

- Ecological Justice as a social justice question.
  Ecological justice struggles were considered to be part of the notable challenges that have adverse effects to the communities. The conversations involved visits to ecological initiatives run by the ecological justice movement in Mathare, and Githurai.

- Women and social justice struggles.
  This involved an examination of the systemic gender imbalance put forth by the conditions in the society, and how to reduce the gap of such inequality.

- Building social movements in the rural and urban setups.

- The organizational formations and tactics: The Social Justice Travelling’ theatre, art and social justice struggles.

- Liberation theology.

- People centered Pan-Africanism: The role of social movements in building Pan-Africanism of a new kind.

- History of resistance in Kenya, Mau Mau and in Africa.

- International solidarity.

- Community Organizing.

• **Method and design.**

The program aimed at achieving an all-round, inclusive and creative outlook to achieve the purpose of the Pan-African convening. Therefore, it tried to explore unlimited approaches in the model of discussion and practical activities.

1. Topical discussions.
   The in-house discussions mainly involved conversations between the participants and among various speakers who addressed different thematic issues. Most of the discussions took place at the Pan-African house, within the base groups and the travels within Nairobi and Kisumu. Most of this discussions involved the different thematic topics mentioned above.
2. Field Visits.
These were majorly targeted at experiencing the similarities and differences in the dynamic alignment of social struggles and building social justice movements. The field visits included visits to grassroots community organizations, discussions with legendary contributors,
social justice activists and elder members of the society who have formerly participated in the liberation struggles.

The process, noting that the conversations required a more elaborate emphasis, insisted on a vibrant exchange process on matters ailing the society and the definitive concepts. As tools to study society and design actionable solutions against such ails. Some of the interactions included a grounding session with Dr Carol Boyce David, Mukoma wa Ngugi, a writer, Abdillatif Abdalla, a prolific writer, poet and a contributor in the Kenyan struggle for democracy, Odungi Randa, Timothy Njoya on Liberation Theology, Women social justice activists and notable organizers like Wahu Kaara and Njeri Kabebei. The activities included public lectures with Mawamko, the Ukombozi library, and the organic intellectuals’ network.

• Seminars.

PEOPLE CENTERED PAN-AFRICANISM IN BUILDING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA.
The seminar on People-Centered Pan Africanism held at the Mathare Social Justice Centre commenced with a session of revolutionary songs, setting the tone reminiscent of the historical role music played in liberation movements across Africa. It served as a reminder of the power of music to inspire and mobilize the masses against colonialism and oppression. Following this stirring start, Mistica, an expressive dramatic performance, energized the audience, setting the way for the introduction of the participating organizations.

The MSJC coordinator Gacheke Gachihi then took the platform to explain the framework behind the seminar theme of People Centered Pan Africanism. Emphasizing that Pan-Africanism should be grounded in the masses and grassroots movements, the coordinator highlighted the imperative to reclaim Pan-Africanism from elite narratives and redefine it as a political project rooted in collective self-reliance with African and Diaspora social movements.

The forum began with the intention of exploring expectations regarding Pan-Africanism. The objectives included delving into the genesis of Pan-Africanism as a concept and its practical implementation, examining the various forms of Pan-Africanism and their origins, illustrating the current understanding of Pan-Africanism, envisioning the desired changes we seek to enact, and comprehending the relationship between feminism and Pan-Africanism.

PRESENTATIONS

Brian Mathenge from Githurai Social Justice Centre and Nicholas Mwangi from the Organic Intellectuals Network then delivered presentations on the origin and contemporary significance of Pan-Africanism. They put it that Pan-Africanism embodies the belief in shared interests and unity among people of African descent. Tracing its roots to the mid-19th century, early proponents like Martin Delany, Alexander Crummel, and Edward Blyden emphasized commonalities and advocated for African freedom and unity.
W.E.B. Du Bois emerged as a seminal figure, championing the study of African history and culture while articulating the centrality of race-related issues in the 20th century. Marcus Garvey, with his Black Nationalist ideology, advocated for African independence and envisioned a return to Africa for people of African descent, establishing the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) to realize these aspirations.

The shift in Pan Africanist leadership from African Americans to Africans occurred in the late 1940s, exemplified by figures like Kwame Nkrumah, who led Ghana to independence in 1957. The resurgence of Pan Africanist cultural thinking during the Black Power movement in the late 1960s and '70s saw African Americans reconnecting with their African heritage, reflecting a broader reclamation of identity and cultural pride.

Post-colonial Africa had a presence of strong Pan Africanist leaders and intellectuals like Patrice Lumumba, Pio Gama Pinto, Walter Rodney, Oginga Odinga, Nasser and Julius Nyerere. Unfortunately some of the leaders and intellectuals were either assassinated or overthrown for their Pan African beliefs and action.

**THE PAN-AFRICAN CONGRESSES, 1900-1945**

The Pan-African Congress emerged as a catalyst for change globally. From its inception in 1900 to its pinnacle in 1945, these series of meetings marked significant milestones in the fight against colonialism, racial discrimination, and imperialism across the African continent and beyond.

At its core, the Pan-African Congress was a peacemaker, advocating for an end to colonial rule and the eradication of racial discrimination. Its members were driven by a profound belief in the principles of equality, justice, and liberation for all Africans, regardless of their geographical location or colonial status. Through a unified voice, they challenged the oppressive systems that sought to subjugate and exploit the African people.
Central to the mission of the Pan-African Congress were its demands for human rights and the equality of economic opportunity. It recognized that the legacy of colonialism had entrenched disparities and injustices that needed to be addressed comprehensively. By articulating a manifesto that encompassed both political and economic aspirations, the Congress articulated a vision for a new world order grounded in international cooperation and solidarity.

The colonial powers, entrenched in their exploitative practices, sought to placate native Africans with promises of limited political concessions and token gestures of economic advancement. However, the Pan-African Congress refused to be appeased by superficial gestures. Instead, it demanded substantive change that would dismantle the structures of oppression and pave the way for genuine progress and empowerment.

It is noteworthy that the ideology of the Pan-African Congress transcended mere nationalism. While it sought self-determination for African nations, it also embraced socialist ideals of equality and global collaboration. Recognizing that colonialism and imperialism were intertwined with the capitalist system, the Congress understood the importance of advocating for a more just and equitable economic order that prioritized the needs of the marginalized and oppressed.

Today People Centered Pan Africanism serves as a rallying point for activists, intellectuals, and revolutionaries across the world, inspiring a sense of unity and purpose in the face of adversity.

The seminar served as a platform for deepening understanding and engagement with Pan-Africanist ideals. By tracing its historical trajectory and contemporary relevance, participants gained insights into the diverse manifestations of Pan-Africanism and its potential as a roadmap for collective empowerment and liberation across the African continent and its diaspora.

Observations.

- The urgent need to define and understand the present realities and forge towards building people-centered Pan-Africanism.
- Unifying social movements through building a common strategy in organizing towards social justice.
- Create a common pool of solidarity and self-reliant organizations

4. Art & Culture.

The role of art in fighting injustices, creating awareness, and education inspired an art-centered approach to bolster creativity and acknowledge the role of art in advocacy and community organizing. These included activities like conscious songs, poems, cultural exchanges and art concerts in Kisumu and Nairobi. Mistica and conversations with the theatre qualified art as a means towards achieving key organizational strategies. Other forms of art, including wall graffiti during the People-Centered Pan-Africanism ushered in
a solidarity campaign against the genocides and injustices happening in Congo and the various parts of the continent.

**FINDINGS AND ACTION PLAN.**
As the program unfolded, the existing challenges were amicably and effectively resolved including health concerns among some participants and comrades, travel logistics and slight changes in the program. The planning committee however, kept on tabs with any arising matters.
There was also need to intensify activities and meetings in various societies and movements to promote organizational exchanges and ties in future.

**ACTION PLAN AND WAY FORWARD.**
1. There arose need to define Pan-Africanism within the contemporary set-up, and within the framework of our societal needs.
2. Need to intensify exchanges within a defined and actionable plan of action.
3. Design a collective model of solidarity in different continental struggles and promote the spirit of Pan-Africanism.
4. Intensify political education and chart a common ideological identity and path in relation to subjects of Feminism, Women Liberation, Pan-Africanism and Social Justice.
5. The need to study and involve grassroots social movements in the process of building Pan-Africanism of a new kind.
6. The need to explore other criteria like adopting legal strategies, political strategies and social approaches in our collective struggles.
7. Establish a common front in the existing political conditions and campaigns.
8. Develop a harmonized methodology in promoting self-reliance within our organizations: fundraisers and self-sustaining programs.
9. Establish a central, collective organizational leadership within our organizations.
10. Africanization of our educational programs and institutions.
Acknowledgements:
1. The Planning Committee.
   Ndungi Githuku-Field Marshalls Band.
   George Nderitu-Field Marshalls Band.

2. The Kitchen Team.

3. The Memory Team.
   Brian Mathenge- Githurai Social Justice Centre.
   Nimrod Elkana- Social Justice Travelling Theatre.
   Rebecca Kabuo- Lucha.
   Killa Ace- Team Gom Sa Boppa.

4. Team Doctor
   Serge Kambalee.

The Base Groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wangari Maathai Base Group</th>
<th>Mau Mau Base Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happiness Binja Yalala</td>
<td>Bineton Diallo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammed Medhism</td>
<td>Kabambi Jireh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanjira Wanjiru</td>
<td>Francois Kamathe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali Thiam</td>
<td>Samba Loum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serge Kambalee</td>
<td>Kabre Malika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Mathenge</td>
<td>Marco Abateccianni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sylvester Ove Draogo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>